



Washington State Legislature

January 15, 2010

Cayla Morgan
Environmental Protection Specialist
Seattle Airports District Office
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue S.W.
Renton, WA 98057-3356

Dave Waggoner, Director
Snohomish County Airport
3220 100th Street S.W., Suite A
Everett, WA 98204

RE: Inadequacy of NEPA EA for the Amendment of Operations Specifications for Air Carrier Operation

Dear Ms. Morgan and Mr. Waggoner,

As elected officials serving the communities south of Paine Field Airport, we feel an obligation to share the feedback and input that our constituents have communicated regarding the Draft NEPA Environmental Assessment for the Amendment of Operations Specifications for Air Carrier Operation, Amendment of a FAR Part 139 Certificate, and Modification and Modular Expansion of the Terminal at the Snohomish County Airport/Paine Field (hereafter referred to as "DEA").

As you have heard at public hearings on this subject:

- the DEA does not acknowledge the full impact of the proposal;
- the DEA does not address the cumulative impacts affected by the amendments;
- the DEA does not address the effects of the amendments on special populations; and the DEA does not inform the public that further environmental review will take place according to state law.

On the first item, the DEA does not acknowledge that the amendments to operations specifications and to the FAR Part 139 certificate would allow Snohomish County Airport to operate virtually unlimited flights at the airport and to fully complete the approved Master Plan, which includes much larger terminal improvements than presented in the modular expansion. It does not recognize that these extended evening and nighttime hours ignore the long standing Mediated Role Determination Agreement that limits nighttime flights, and would be a significant impact to the surrounding communities.

Failure to acknowledge this nearly unlimited growth potential at the airport is not honest to our constituents nor does it allow the DEA to consider the full impacts of this change. Our constituents will not have additional opportunities under the National Environmental Policy Act to address these future impacts of growth, if the DEA is approved as presented. This is manifestly unfair and violates the spirit of NEPA.

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Secondly, the cumulative effects of these amendments must be considered. For the DEA to effectively measure the environmental impacts of these changes accommodated under the Airport Master Plan, it must consider the impacts of full-scale development at the airport. Because federal law and FAA regulations do not allow a Category I airport to place limitations in the types of aircraft allowed to operate schedule passenger service, nor can the airport impose limitations on the hours of operations, this amendment would allow the potential for the most noise-producing aircraft to operate at nearly every hour of the day. The DEA fails to address the impacts of these operations on noise, air quality, traffic, climate change and general quality of life in the surrounding communities.

Additionally, the adopted Master Plan for the airport clearly identifies a future terminal location, significantly larger than the modular terminal proposed. So, allowing the certificate amendments would pave the way for the construction of these improvements in the future. As such, this DEA must address those potential impacts in the analysis of the proposed certificate changes.

Thirdly, the DEA fails to address the impacts of these potential growth scenarios on special populations and ethnic populations. The DEA was released only in English, failing to adequately notify ethnic minority communities in surrounding communities of this process. This is contrary to the spirit of NEPA, which is intended to ensure that environmental reviews respect the core values of environmental justice.

Finally, the DEA fails to notify the public that there may be additional review conducted under the state Environmental Protection Act (SEPA). This gives the public an incomplete view of the environmental review process and is likely to cause confusion about further review under SEPA. The final analysis should provide a clearer view of opportunities for public participation.

In summary, the DEA as presented lacks critical information on the impacts of the amendments and proposed expansion. The net effect of this deficiency gives a dishonest and dangerously naïve picture of the environmental impacts of the proposed changes. Such a flawed review will necessarily lead to a lack of appropriate mitigation and to devastating consequences for the affected communities.

As elected officials, we believe it is our duty to strongly object to the DEA and demand that the analysis be full and complete. Anything less would be a disservice to our constituents, and a grave mistake for our community.

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We further request that the Federal Aviation Administration prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement, to ensure that all of these objections and deficiencies are addressed and a fair assessment of the environmental impacts be conducted.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



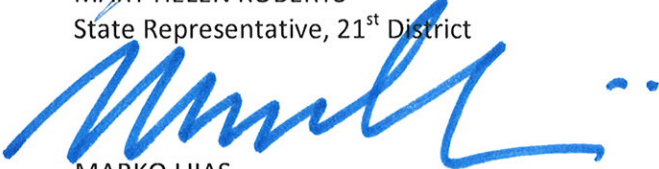
PAULL SHIN

State Senator, 21st District



MARY HELEN ROBERTS

State Representative, 21st District



MARKO LIAS

State Representative, 21st District

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